



State of California
Respiratory Care Board
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Inquiry: If the procedures listed below are within the Respiratory Care's scope of practice. Our Respiratory Therapy Department is currently performing arterial punctures and blood gas analysis with moderate complexity instruments. (1) We have been asked to perform electrolytes (sodium, potassium, chloride, calcium), Hemoglobin, hematocrit, metabolites (glucose, lactate), and co-oximetry, also on moderate complexity instruments. (2) Please address venipuncture (and training). (3) Is point-of-care or near-patient testing with moderate complexity instruments covered by our scope of practice?

Response: In response to question 1: The procedures you listed in this question are considered moderately complex laboratory testing, and are allowed by Business & Professions Code Sections 1206 and 1206.5(b)(8).

In response to question 2: Venipuncture performed by RCPs is allowed by Business & Professions Code Sections 3702(d) and 1242.6(c).

Please be advised that the RCB suggests that a "respiratory care protocol," as specified in Section 3702 of the RCPA, be developed for this procedure.

In response to question 3, the RCB classifies point-of-care testing as a task which is not verbatim from the Respiratory Care Practice Act but, in the Respiratory Care Board's judgment, highly inferred and allowed.

Reference # 1999-C-68